THE CHELLBERG FAMILY
THE CHELLBERG FARM

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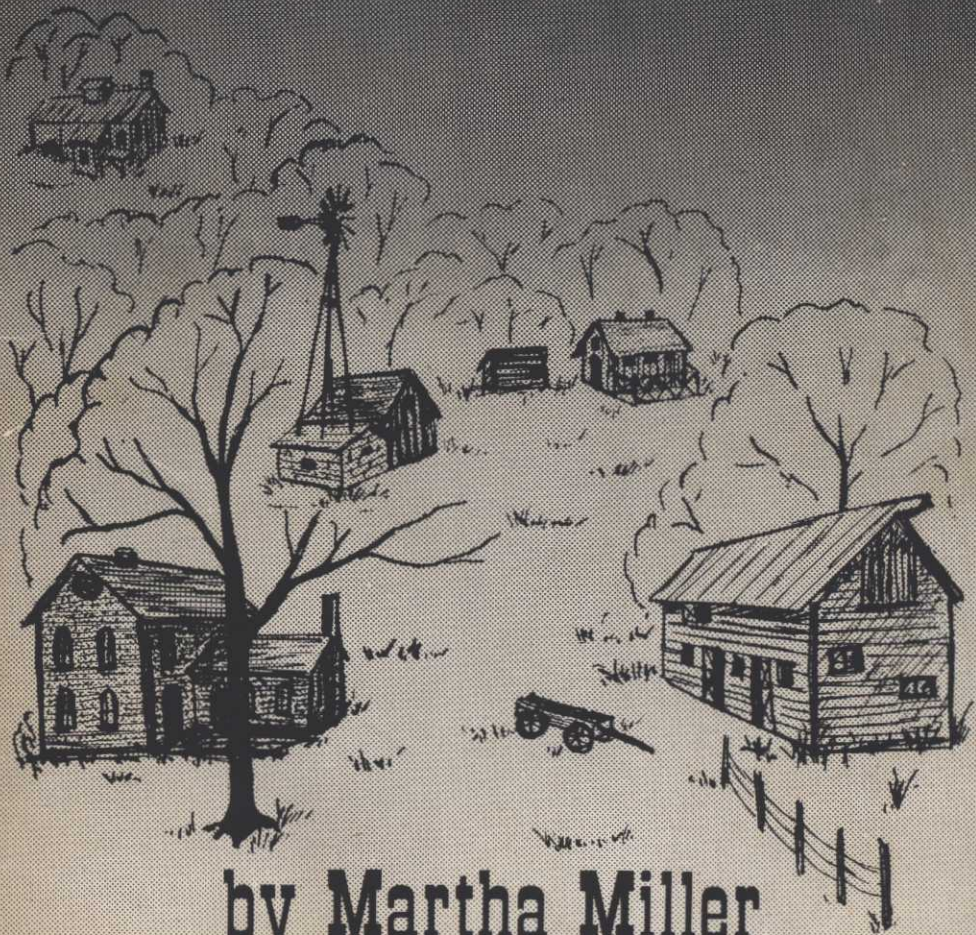
Chellberg Farm



by Martha Miller

Mr + Mrs
Grant Chalberg
1985

THE CHELLBERG FAMILY

THE CHELLBERG FARM

By

Martha Miller

Dedicated to Naomi Chellberg Studebaker

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Chesterton, Indiana, U.S.A.

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GRANARY
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BARN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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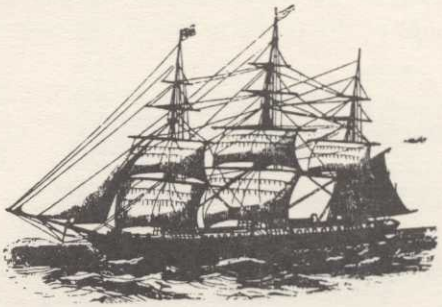
THE CHELLBERG FARM

The First Family

Anders Ludwig Kjellberg was born in Forselfsborgslän, Vestarejotland, Sweden on March 22, 1830. Johanna Anderson was born in this town on April 28, 1829. They were childhood friends and married when they grew up, about 1857. They had a son, Cahrl, born in Forselfsborgslän in 1859.



They were among a large group of Swedish people who emigrated to our country in 1863. They came with Anders' brothers, Fritz and John, traveling from the port of Gothenburg by sailboat to Boston. From there they went by train, riding in a railroad car that had been built for transporting cattle, rather than passengers. It was a long, hard trip to Chicago where Anders' other brother lived. This whole journey took four months, six to eight weeks on the boat, several days on the train, and the other days waiting at the boat dock and in the train station. They took very little baggage because the cabin on the boat was too small for three people and many suitcases, and the train was too crowded with people. But they had to carry enough food for the whole four months journey. Much of it was dried food, fish, hardtack, flour, dried fruit and hog fat.

When they arrived in Chicago, they were met by Mr. Wicker, son-in-law of Joseph Bailly. He was developing the Bailly land near Porter, Indiana, cutting and selling timber to the railroad for cross ties to support the iron rails, and for fuel to make steam in the train engines.

As the land was cleared, Mr. Wicker needed farmers to clean out the brush and get the land ready for planting. [1] Anders and John were farmers, so they went with Mr. Wicker to Baillytown; Fritz went to Michigan City, Indiana.

A small log house was provided for the Kjellbergs a short distance from the Bailly homestead, and they were able to get settled right away. Anders worked hard clearing the Bailly land; he was also a tailor, he made clothes for the Howe family. Mrs. Howe was a daughter of Joseph Bailly who lived at the Bailly homestead.

(1) From a lecture by Mr. William Ahrendt to the Duneland Historical Society, April 17, 1980.

Cahrl was four years old when they came to Baillytown. He soon had a sister, Carolyn, who was born in the middle 1860's. She died in early childhood at the age of three or four. Emily was born in 1867, when Cahrl was eight.

The Swedish language was spoken in the Kjellberg home; then Cahrl learned English when he went to School in Porter. Anders had to learn some English in a hurry when he worked at the Bailly's and to communicate with the shop people in Porter, where he traded.

Anders was a lay preacher; he helped to establish the Augsburg Lutheran Church in Porter, and he became the church school superintendent. There was a large settlement of Swedish people in the area who joined this church. Some of them were newly arrived immigrants who were homesick and didn't know the language of the country; others had no money or friends or relatives. They needed a church and a preacher who understood their problems and could help them. The Circuit Riding preachers who came occasionally to hold services seldom spoke Swedish as Anders did. He and his family often took care of these people until there was a place for them to live.

In 1874, the Kjellbergs bought eighty acres of Bailly property from Mr. McVickers, a son-in-law of Joseph Bailly. Eleven years after they came to this country, they were landowners! This was something they had dreamed about years ago when they were farming a small piece of rocky ground in Sweden. They set to work immediately to build a simple, but comfortable, log cabin on their own land. When it was finished and they had moved in, they started the big barn with timber cut from their own trees. The huge, two-floor barn was finished in five years, about 1880.

Being landowners brought on new responsibilities. Anders and Cahrl became American citizens. They changed the spelling of the family name to Chellberg about that time, and Cahrl used an easier spelling of Carl. Carl was fifteen when they moved to their house and Emily was seven.

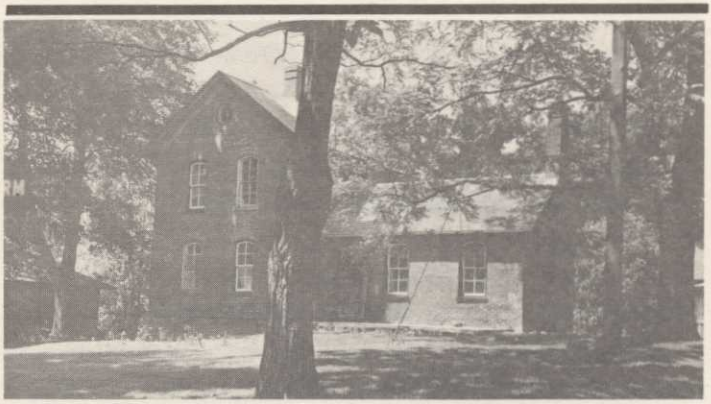
Anders and Carl spent months preparing their five new fields for planting. They needed to break up the sod, pulverize and smooth it, and plant the seeds. A kitchen garden was plowed and planted; an orchard was started with apple, pear, cherry and nut trees.

Several years after they moved into the house, in 1884, it burned. Johanna was so severely burned in that fire she never recovered, although she lived ten more years. The family moved into the barn, hired a contractor and ordered a fireproof brick house to be built. Made of Porter brick, it is standing now.(2) It was built larger and more comfortable than the old log house.

(2) Bricks were made of clay which was dug, pressed and fired in the brick yards in Porter, Indiana.

Other buildings were added to the farm as they were needed: A granary, corncrib, chicken house, wagon shed, smokehouse and a pump-house with windmill.

Three years after the fire, in 1887, Carl, or C.L. as he was called, took over the farm. Anders was fifty-seven; Johanna was fifty-eight. It was time for these hard-working people to retire. Anders lived six more years; he died in 1893. Johanna died in 1899.



The Second Family

When Anders and Johanna were gone, C.L. Chellberg and Emily Chellberg Borg and her husband lived in the house and ran the farm together.

Then, when C.L. married in 1901 at the age of forty-two, Emily and her husband moved to their new house just north of the farm.

The new bride, OttoMina Peterson was called Mina. Her family background was similar to C.L's. Her father, Johan Peterson, and her mother,Christina Hokanson,

came from Smaland, Sweden, on a sailing boat, then to Chicago on a cattle train, just like the Chellbergs. Mina was the eighth child of eleven in her family. She was born in Baillytown, September 3, 1869. She spoke only Swedish and went to school at the Burstrom School. [3] She was thirty-two when she married C.L.

Mina's father was a blacksmith. When he first moved to Baillytown, he worked in Chicago during the week. He walked home around the lake on Friday night and then back to Chicago every Sunday night, about 30 miles! What a long walk he had. After this job in Chicago was finished, he did blacksmithing in Baillytown; he knew how to make any kind of tool out of iron and steel.

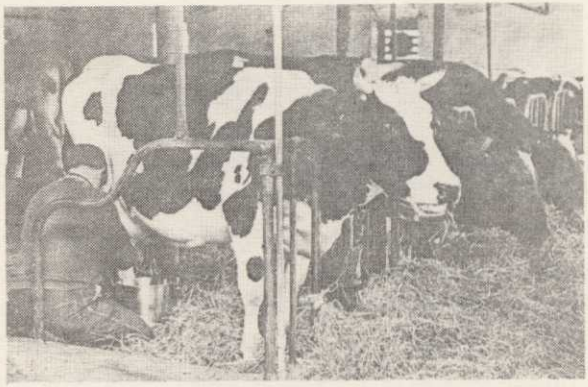
The new Mrs. Chellberg made some changes in the house. The dining room had been three small rooms, she took the partitions out to make one large room. An addition was built for a kitchen, a summer kitchen, a porch, and a tiny room for the milk separator and steps down to the cistern (the tank to store the rainwater).

(3) For a description of Burstrom School, see the pamphlet, "History of Burstrom Chapel, a Swedish Heritage," by William J. Ahrendt, April, 1975.

She liked flowers, so she made several beautiful flower gardens, including a round one in the front yard which had pansies, cosmos, iris, chrysanthemums, gladiolus, roses and daisies.

C.L. and Mina had four children. Frank was born in 1903; he died of pneunomia in 1904. Ruth Mildred was born in 1904; she died in 1973. Naomi Victoria was born in 1907. Carl Lewis was born in 1913 and died in 1973.

The main crop on the Chellberg farm was grain until the South Shore Railroad was built in 1908 and made a regular stop within a mile of the farm. Then it became a grain and a dairy farm. The milk was put on the train daily to be taken to a dairy in East Chicago, Indiana.



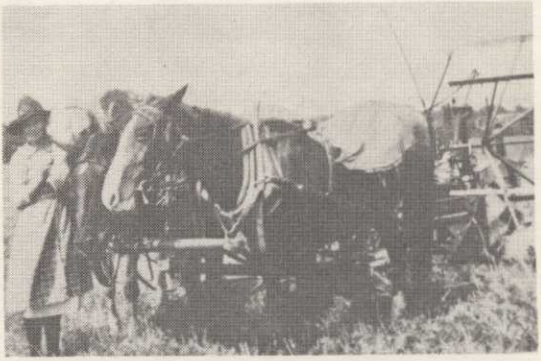
This required lots of hard work for the whole Chellberg family. Up at five o'clock each morning, they went to the barn, put on their wooden shoes to keep their feet dry, fed and milked the cows, then sent them out to the water trough in the barnyard. There were twelve to fourteen milking cows to care for, plus the young cows who would be next year's herd. They put the warm milk into big cans, and took them to the water trough in the pump-house to cool. If the wind was blowing, the windmill turned and pumped cold water into the water trough; otherwise, it had to be pumped

by one of the girls. When the milk was cooled, C.L. hitched up the team, loaded the cans on the wagon and drove them down to the seven o'clock train.

The children fed and watered the horses, pigs, chickens,ducks and geese, and gathered the eggs. Then they were ready for breakfast. And what a meal it was! Bacon butchered from their own hog and smoked in their smokehouse, eggs from their chickens, sausage made by Mrs. Chellberg, and toast from Mrs. Chellberg's home-made rye bread. The jelly and jam was made from berries picked by the children. With so many apple trees growing on the farm, there was something made from apples, apple butter, apple coffeecake, apple pie.

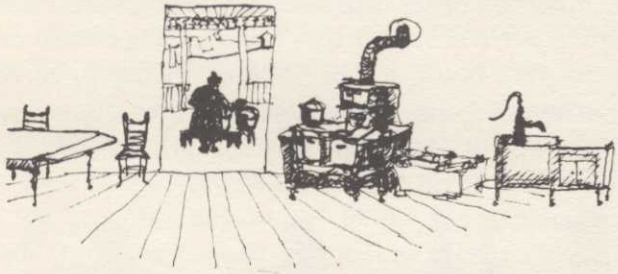
After breakfast, it was time to get ready for school. The girls put on their long cotton dresses with long sleeves and high necks. Carl Lewis wore regular farmer's clothes, blue jeans with a blue cotton shirt and a denim jacket. They waited for the horse and buggy school bus to take them to school in Porter. They learned English at school, as their father did, but they spoke only Swedish at home, just like their grandparents! They went to school on the bus everyday as children do now!

After school there were chores to do; Three wood boxes to fill with kindling, in the kitchen for the wood cooking stove and for the heating stoves in the front room and in the bedroom. Then it was time to feed, milk and water the cows again. The feeding and milking routine was followed twice a day, seven days a week. The children did other daily work too; they helped with the dishes, the laundry, cooking, making butter in the thirty-gallon churn, dusting, airing the beds and cleaning the kerosene lamps. In the spring, they weeded the garden; in the fall, they helped with canning and making jam. In the summer, Mr. Chellberg needed the children to work with him because he had only one farm hand to help him. The girls started working in the fields when they were twelve. They began at sunrise and worked long hours, although they had many breaks during the day. Ruth was the outdoor girl; she loved the farm work! She liked to be with the animals; she even raised a calf and trained it to pull the buggy. Her father taught her to graft branches on apple trees so special varieties could be grown. She plowed, she cultivated, she rode the hay binder. Carl was much younger than the girls, so he didn't do many of these things.



Mrs. Chellberg had a daily routine to follow. Monday was her wash day. She pumped water from the cistern in the summer kitchen and heated it on the stove.

She soaked the dark clothes and boiled the white clothes; she washed on a washboard and wrung out by hand. Sometimes she used her own soap from a recipe of fat and wood ashes made after they had butchered. Clothes were hung outside to dry, or, if the weather was bad, on a rack on the kitchen wall.



On Tuesday, she ironed; Wednesday, she mended; Thursday was her regular baking day; Friday, she cleaned the house; Saturday, she went to town to shop; and Sunday, the family went to church. In addition to this work, she planned and prepared three meals a day, did her outside work in the gardens and anything else that was needed.

The seasons determined the kinds of activities the Chellbergs had on the farm. In January, February and March there were winter jobs to do. The fields were cleared and brush was burned. The fence rows were cleaned out, rails were split for new fence posts, and plenty of wood was chopped for kindling. Harnesses were repaired with linen thread and the machinery was cleaned and sharpened. They took corn off the cobs, keeping the largest kernels for planting the next year and using the rest in cooking.

In February, they butchered a hog. They raised twelve hogs a year, butchered six and sold the others or used them for new stock. New animals were born in February and March.

The children had fun in winter. They went coasting in the ravine on a scoop shovel or on their sled. They liked to play in the corncrib, too; they climbed

up the walls and sat on top. Many young people came over to their house for sleigh rides, then they all went to someone's house for coffee and treats. They went to church a lot in winter, and the girls always walked to choir practice on Friday night.

There was the usual mending to do on winter nights; holes in their stockings and rips in their clothes. They sewed for themselves and helped each other make dresses; they traded patterns with their friends. They knit caps and mittens, and crocheted lace trim for collars and sleeves.

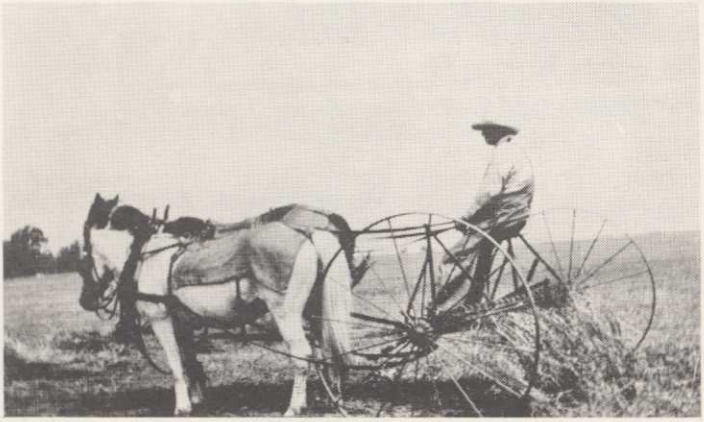
In the spring months of April and May, chickens and geese were set on eggs for hatching. The ten adult geese were plucked and their feathers were used to make fresh feather pillows.

When the weather was warm and the fields were dry, the horses pulled the plow through the hard, black

dirt; then the harrow went through the coarse clods; and the drag smoothed the soil until it was ready for the seeds. Just like in Anders time, they were busy every spring planting corn, oats, wheat, clover, timothy and alfalfa.

Mrs. Chellberg's gardens needed plowing so she could plant her flowers and vegetables, beans, carrots, potatoes, sweet corn, cabbage, leaf lettuce, tomatoes, parsnips, green peppers and sage.

In the three summer months of June, July, and August, the corn was cultivated. The hay was mowed, loaded on the hay rack and pulled to the barn. A fork came down from the hayloft and locked into the load, then the horses were moved to the other end of the barn and the fork pulled up the load into the loft. The girls took turns riding on top of the hay load or driving the horses to the barn. This hay was used to feed the animals in the winter.



The binder cut the wheat and stacked it in bundles. They were picked up and set in shocks with the grain heads up, and left to dry for three weeks until the threshing machine came to cut the grain from the stalks. Neighbors helped each other with all the summer jobs. They would go from farm to farm, starting at

sunrise with the men doing the farm work and the women cooking a fine, huge meal at noon. Mrs. Chellberg liked to make sweet rolls and cookies; she sent these and steaming cups of hot coffee out to the workmen in the fields.

There was time in summer to visit friends and neighbors, to have picnics and celebrations, especially June 24, which is a Swedish religious holiday. They went to Ladies Aid, prayer meetings, Luther League, choir practice and church on Sunday. The children went swimming, or played hide-and-seek, they walked in the woods looking for wildflowers, and to the dunes to pick blueberries. Their friends came over to pick fruit in the orchard, and to see the young animals. They took the South Shore train to Michigan City, but they walked or took the horse and buggy to Porter. It was always a happy life on the farm.

In the summer, people came from Chicago on the South Shore train to visit the dunes. They often came to picnics at the Chellberg farm. Mrs. Chellberg did the cooking; she was an expert because she had once been a cook for the Barker family of the Pullman Standard Company in Michigan City. Often there were large crowds of people at these picnics to enjoy her delicious meals.

Mr. Chellberg played the accordion and sang Swedish songs. He sang to his cows, too, as he was milking. He thought it calmed them and they gave more milk.

One summer day when the girls were young, Mrs. Chellberg, who loved to drive horses, was out riding when a terrible electrical storm came up. A bolt of lightning struck the horse that was pulling her buggy and killed it instantly. Mrs. Chellberg was so upset by that bad experience, she was always afraid of storms after that day.

In August, there were many weeds to pull and grass to cut in the fence rows, in the gardens, and between all the buildings. Mrs. Chellberg started late summer harvesting from her garden. Beans, corn, and some tomatoes were ready for canning. Berries were picked; blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and dewberries. Early apples were canned; and jam was made.

When the cooler weather of September came, it was time to put in the winter wheat. They spread the manure, harrowed and dragged the ground, and sowed the seeds. The wheat harvested in early summer was sold and the family had money to spend. Tina and Tillie Johnson came to sew for them; the children went back to school.

Ruth went as far as the eighth grade, then she stayed home until Naomi was ready for high school three years later. Her father asked her to take Naomi to school everyday; Ruth said yes, but he shouldn't expect her to come home; she was going to high school, too. They both graduated in May, 1926.

Every morning they hitched up the horse and buggy, rode to Chesterton, unhitched the horse and put him in a rented barn, fed him his lunch of hay and grain and went to school. After school they hitched him up and went home.

One day the horse got out of the barn and disappeared. Ruth was called out of class to find him, and, just as she thought, he was on his way home. She caught up with him before he crossed some busy railroad tracks.

Naomi and Ruth were the only students who drove a horse and buggy to school. They picked up a girl on the way, too. Other students walked or got rides with their families.

The fall harvest continued in October and November. Walnuts were gathered from the trees in their yard; they dug onions, turnips, potatoes, carrots, beets and picked cabbages; many of these were put in the cellar for winter storage. Apples were picked; some were stored, the rest were pressed into cider. Part of their fall harvest was kept in the unheated dining room which was not used in the winter. It made an excellent refrigerator. On cool fall nights, they cracked nuts to eat or to use in December baking.

The corn was picked with a horsedrawn picking machine. Some of the corn stalks were cut while green, hauled on the hay rack to a machine that cut them up and blew them into the silo, making silage to feed the cows.

A beef was butchered several times a year. It was done on a cold October or November day. They always made corned beef when they butchered; it was a favorite food of theirs.

The granary, built in 1890, was a two-story building used to store grain and feed. When the grain was harvested, a wagon load was taken to the McCool mill which was a few miles away, to be ground. After it was ground, it was loaded on the wagon again and taken back to the farm to be put in fifty-pound bags, or, if they ran out of bags, in scoops or anything else that was handy, and dumped in the storage bins in the granary. The wheat bin was downstairs because wheat is a heavier grain; the oat and rye bins were upstairs. The men carried the heavy sacks on their backs up the narrow steps to the bins.

The cows got a big scoop of silage from the silo and a pint of grain from the granary for supper every night. During the day, they had hay and outside pasture to eat. The horses ate oats at night and outside pasture in the day.

The hen house was plastered to protect the chickens from extreme heat or cold. The roost was raised about four feet from the floor on the north wall. Mrs. Chellberg was particular about her chickens. In very cold weather, she brought buckets of hot water out to warm up the hen house. She knew they would lay eggs if they were warm. She kept fifty chickens; they ate corn and grain.

The pigshed and hogpen were down by the ravine. Pigs were fed sour milk, garbage and grain.

The family bathroom, or outhouse, was by the granary. The farm also had a woodshed, a new silo and a tenant house for a farm worker.

A hog was butchered again early in December. This was a long, all day job because every part of the animal was to be used. The Chellberg's neighbors came to help. It was shot to kill it and strung up in the air to be bled. After that, it was put in a big tub of boiling water until the hair was loose, then the hide was scraped clean. It was strung up again, cleaned out and cut into hams, bacon, roasts and lard. Sausage, cracklings and headcheese were made; the hams, bacon and sausage were smoked in the smokehouse with hickory cut from their trees. They ground some of the lean pork, browned it on the stove and baked it several hours in the oven. Then they put it in quart jars, covered it with a layer of lard, sealed the lid on the jar, and had canned pork for the rest of the winter. They made a lot of pork sausage, too.

It took a month to prepare for Christmas. Mrs. Chellberg's specialities were baked, cookies, sweet rolls, rye and limpa bread and sponge cake. The traditional fruit, soup, puddings, potato sausage, meatballs and lutefisk were made. Lutefisk is a dried codfish soaked in lye water for nine days, then cooked in saltwater. These foods were always accompanied with steaming cups of rich, dark Swedish coffee made with an egg in a big granite pot. It was so tasty, everyone in the family drank it.

Socks, clothes and doll dresses were made for Christmas gifts, but the girls were outdoor children so they probably wanted a sled or ice skates or something warm to wear. They did have a few toys, though, a teddy bear and china doll who got a new set of clothes every Christmas; and Carl had a toy horse.

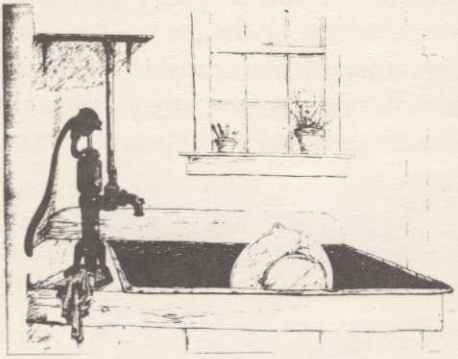
St. Lucia's Day is an important Swedish holiday on December 13. It symbolizes the return of light. Early in the morning one of the girls dressed in white, wearing a green wreath with seven candles on her head, went through the house waking everyone, serving them coffee and coffeecake in bed. Naomi would never let them light the candles on her head; she was too afraid of fire.

On Christmas Eve, the animals were given an extra

large ration of food. Then the Chellberg's opened their gifts and had their big Christmas dinner. After that, it was off to bed and up again at four o'clock Christmas morning for coffee and rolls before going to the special five o'clock Julotta Christmas service at church.

On New Year's Eve, they had a musical program at the church from nine to ten-fifteen; after that there were refreshments as they waited for the old year to go out and the new year to come in.

As the original farm buildings deteriorated from age and use, they were repaired or replaced. The 1900 pumphouse was rebuilt in 1936. A new corncrib was built around 1948 with wood from the old silo.



In 1919, another porch was added to the house to hold sixteen Delco batteries and a generator. Then the house was wired for electricity. After the sugar house was built in the 1930's, the hand pump in the kitchen was replaced by a faucet and a waterline that went from the well at the sugar house to the sink. Instead of pumping to get water, they turned a faucet.

The farm continued as a dairy and grain farm until C.L. Chellberg died from complications of surgery on August 6, 1937. The dairy farm was discontinued after that.

Mrs. Chellberg died at the age of eighty-two, on November 15, 1952, at the farm. She was the last living child of the Peterson family.

The Third Families

Ruth stayed home until her father died in 1937. Then she went to St. Catherine's Hospital in East Chicago, Indiana, where she studied to be an x-ray technician. She graduated at the head of her class and went to Loretta Hospital in Chicago. Later she became night supervisor of the x-ray department at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, a position she held for twenty-two years. She came home weekends and vacations to her house in Baillytown. She retired and died of cancer on April 20, 1973.

Carl married Hilda Johnson in 1938. He took over the farm and raised about sixty sheep. When he went to work on the railroad, he sold the sheep, but farmed some of his land and he farmed with a neighbor.

Carl and Hilda remodeled the upstairs as an apartment for themselves and their two children. When Mrs. Chellberg died, they moved downstairs, keeping the upstairs as an apartment.

There were no changes on the farm during Carl's time because he did little farming and he did not use the buildings. Hilda Johnson died of cancer in 1970.

In 1957, the United States government bought about an acre to put in a septic tank for the Nike base which adjoined the farm. Then, in 1972, the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore bought the farm from Naomi and Carl. Carl left that same year and moved to another farm in Hebron, Indiana. He died in his sleep, May 22, 1973.

Naomi Chellberg graduated from high school in May and married Alden Studebaker a month later on June 24, 1926, in the Augsburg Church. The choir she belonged to for so many years sang at her wedding. Mr. Studebaker was superintendent of construction for William Wirt, developer of Dune Acres, so he had a new house ready for them to live in. They had two children, Henry and Arthur. Mr. Studebaker died in 1955.

In the 1930's, he built the sugar camp to make maple syrup on the Chellberg farm. It was a family enterprise for the six weeks the sap was running. The last week in January, all of February, and the first week of March, the weather would most often thaw in the daytime and freeze at night with no wind; this was the time for collecting sap. They tapped two-hundred maple trees in the woods, put spigots in the holes and hung buckets under the spigots. Carl drove the horses through the woods emptying the buckets into a barrel on the wagon, or sleigh, if there was snow. He took it back to camp, dipped out the sap into the three hundred gallon storage tank on a platform outside the sugar shack. The tank had a pipe leading to another tank inside the building. From there the sap went to the evaporator pan which boiled it down to the right thickness; it took about three or four hours. Mr. Studebaker fired up the stove and cooked the sap; Mrs. Studebaker strained and bottled it for sale. They made fifty-five to sixty

gallons of syrup every year, getting from four to ten dollars a gallon, depending upon prices. Some people brought their own bottles for Mrs. Studebaker to sterilize in a kettle of boiling water on the back of the stove.

Naomi Chellberg Studebaker is the last remaining Chellberg from Anders' family. Her interest and enthusiasm, her knowledge and willingness to share her family story has helped in the restoration of the Chellberg farm. She has given us a picture of her life on an early twentieth century farm, similar to farms all over the country, but unique because the owners and their children were Swedish Americans.

The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore has restored the farm. Their special events, festivals and demonstrations show how life was lived at that time.

THE CHELLBERG FAMILY

The First Family

Anders Ludwig Kjellberg
Born: March 22, 1830
Died: 1893

Johanna Anderson
Born: April 28, 1829
Died: 1899

Cahrl Kjellberg
Born: December 25, 1859
Died: August 8, 1937

Carolyn
Died: Age three or four, 1860's

Emily
Born: 1867
Died: 1940's

The Second Family

C.L. Chellberg
Born: December 25, 1859
Died: August 8, 1937

OttoMina Peterson
Born: September 3, 1869
Died: November 15, 1952

Frank
Born: September, 1903
Died: January, 1904

Ruth Mildred
Born: April 6, 1904
Died: April 20, 1973

Naomi Victoria
Born: October 15, 1907

Carl Lewis
Born: June 19, 1913
Died: May 22, 1973

The Third Families

Alden Studebaker

Naomi Chellberg

Henry

Arthur

Carl Lewis Chellberg

Hilda Johnson

Mrs. Brent Medley

Mrs. Carment Lorraine Collins

This is the Chellberg recipe for a famous cheesecake pudding as remembered by Naomi Chellberg Studebaker. Her mother went to the barn, got a bucket of warm milk, brought it into the kitchen and made the pudding. Mrs. Studebaker has updated it.

Chellberg's Ostakaka

2 quarts skim milk, lukewarm
1/2 cup flour
1 Hanson's rennet tablet*, crushed
1/2 tsp. almond extract
1 cup half and half or cream
4 eggs

Mix flour into warm milk. Add rennet. Cover, let stand for half hour. It will set up. Stir, pour off whey. Cover again, let stand half hour, pour off whey.

Add to curd, sugar, flavoring, cream, eggs, mix well. Pour in heavily buttered baking dish. Bake at 300° for 1 1/2 hours or until firm.

*Hanson's rennet tablets are found in the drugstore. Junket works as well; use three tablets or the amount recommended in the recipe booklet.

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